

Memorandum

City of Tempe

Date: November 22, 2011
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk, (350-8007)
Subject: Election Nomination Procedures

At the November 17, 2011 Issue Review Session (IRS), information regarding a proposed change to the election nomination process was briefed to City Council. City Council requested additional information including election costs, % of early ballots, date election could be held, and information regarding shared elections with other jurisdictions.

Election costs and comparisons.

Election costs vary depending on the number of registered voters, number of early ballots requests, number of issues on the ballot, printing and postage costs, and if the election is being shared with another jurisdiction. The City contracts with Maricopa County Elections Department (MCED) for certain election services including early voting, polling place voting, and ballot formatting and printing. Other election costs are paid directly to vendors, such as sample ballot/publicity pamphlet layout, printing and mailing, Spanish language translation services and publication. Listed below are the total election costs paid from 2000 through 2010:

Election Cycle	Total Cost	Election Issue
2000	\$ 185,505.04	March: candidate election May: candidate election, Charter amendment, sales tax for performing arts center
2001 & 2002	\$ 323,294.07	September 2001: recall election March 2002: candidate election May 2002: candidate election, bonds, smoking initiative
2002	\$ 20,001.07	September: bed tax
2004	\$ 201,265.51	March: candidate election May: candidate election, general plan
2006	\$ 217,485.33	March: candidate election May: candidate election, bonds
2006	\$ 3,001.75	September: franchise election (most costs reimbursed by APS and SW Gas)
2008	\$ 247,029.76	March: candidate election May: candidate election November 2008 : bond election
2010	\$ 123,414.29	March: candidate election, lodging tax May: .2% temporary sales tax (May election shared with Statewide tax ballot issue)

The MCED fee schedule was revised effective July 1, 2010. This is the first fee schedule change in approximately 10 years. Below is a comparison of the MCED fee schedule prior to July 2010 and the current fee schedule:

Prior to July 2010:

Cost per registered voter: \$.73

Cost per early ballot: \$1.72

Cost to share a county wide ballot: \$.31 per active voter; no extra charge for early ballots

Current fees effective July 2010:

Cost per registered voter: \$1.37

Cost per early ballot: \$2.12

Cost to share a county wide ballot: \$.50 per active voter; no extra charge for early ballots

Note: if two or more jurisdictions share an election, for each overlapping precinct, each jurisdiction will be charged at half the rate of the largest participating jurisdiction.

To illustrate the change in the MCED fee schedule, below is a chart that outlines costs comparisons for the most recent candidate election held in March 2010:

March 9, 2010 Primary Election

	<i>Actual Costs – shared election</i>	<i>Computed costs using current fee schedule - shared election</i>	<i>Computed costs using current fee schedule - standalone election</i>
Maricopa County Election Department (MCED) Fees:			
1. 4,463 Active Registered Voters	\$ 3,257.99	\$ 6,114.31	\$ 115,941.73
2. 80,166 Active Registered Voters (shared w/Tempe Elementary and Kyrene School Districts)	29,260.59	54,913.71	
3. 1,631 Early Voting Requests	2,805.32	3,457.72	54,011.24
4. 23,846 Early Voting Requests (shared w/ Tempe Elementary and Kyrene School Districts)	20,507.56	25,276.76	
Total MCED fees	\$ 55,831.46	\$ 89,762.50	\$ 169,952.97
Other election costs (paid directly to vendors)	\$ 21,788.37	\$ 21,788.37	\$ 21,788.37
Total Election Costs	\$ 77,619.83	\$ 111,550.87	\$ 191,741.34

Information regarding when school districts elections can be held.

State statutes that govern school district elections vary from city/town election statutes. I have contacted a Tempe Union High School District representative for information detailing when school districts can hold candidate and special elections. This information, as well as the number of City elections shared with other jurisdictions, will be provided to Councilmembers shortly.

Effective date of a proposed Charter amendment.

All Charter amendments must be approved by the voters and signed by the Governor. The Charter amendment effective date is the date the Governor signs the Charter certification. If a Charter amendment concerns election procedures, the U.S. Department of Justice must grant “preclearance” of the election change. Once DOJ preclearance has been received, the Charter provision would be in effect for the next candidate election nomination process, 2014, unless effective date language is included in the Charter amendment.

Date of the General Election, Charter language, date nomination petitions are due.

The City Attorney's Office is currently reviewing the impact of state statutes and case law to determine if the General Election can be held in March instead of May. Once determined, Charter amendment language can be prepared. At that time, clarification can also be made about the date nomination petitions are due.

Election statistics regarding voter turnout, including early ballots vs. polling place ballots.

Election	Active Registered Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout	Early Ballots Cast	Early Ballot Percent	Polling Place Ballots Cast	Polling Ballot Percent
Primary - March 14, 2000	65,532	16,513	25.20%	8,298	50%	8,215	50%
General - May 16, 2000	65,976	15,407	23.40%	10,763	70%	4,644	30%
Special: Mayor Recall- Sept 11, 2001	74,399	23,956	32.20%	15,253	64%	8,703	36%
Primary - March 12, 2002	74,238	13,614	18.30%	10,391	76%	3,223	24%
General - May 21, 2002	75,724	20,056	26.50%	12,545	63%	7,511	37%
Special: Bed Tax- Sept 10, 2002	77,266	16,417	21.30%	6,272	38%	10,145	62%
Primary- March 9, 2004	74,367	18,644	25.00%	11,871	64%	6,773	36%
General- May 18, 2004	73,352	11,581	15.80%	9,535	82%	2,046	18%
Primary- March 14, 2006	76,613	13,283	17.30%	9,449	71%	3,834	29%
General- May 16, 2006	70,431	12,550	18.00%	9,400	75%	3,150	25%
Special: Franchise- Sept 12, 2006	*	24,332					
Primary- March 11, 2008	69,405	15,783	23.00%	12,494	79%	3,289	21%
General- May 20, 2008	69,698	15,710	23.00%	13,013	83%	2,697	17%
Special: Bond Election – Nov 4, 2008	79,066	63,362	80.14%	*			
Primary- March 9, 2010	84,629	15,295	18.00%	13,128	86%	2,167	14%
General- May 18, 2010	77,439	28,943	37.00%	17,995	62%	10,948	38%

* Requires further research